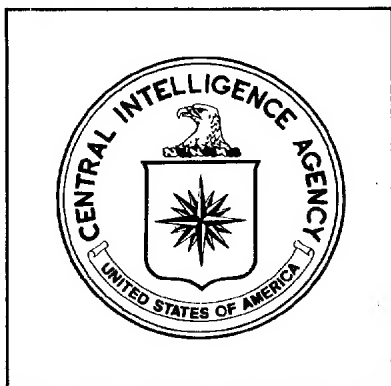


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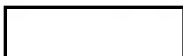


Latin America

REGIONAL AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS

State Dept. review completed

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This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Latin America Division, Office of Regional and Political Analysis, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Brazil: The Political Impasse

This highly speculative article was written by ORPA's Brazil analyst and is a reflection of his views alone. It is published in the hope that it will generate dialogue among readers of this publication. Questions and comments may be addressed to the author.

11 President Geisel's moves last month to undermine the growing influence of the only legal opposition party in Brazil have resulted in heightened political anxiety in both civilian and military circles. This uneasiness has been most visible during the current rash of student demonstrations, and in the apprehensive reaction of security forces to these protests.

Students Versus Security Forces

1, 2, 3, 11 Both sides up to now have exercised unusual restraint in the aftermath of Geisel's actions. When students in Sao Paulo began demonstrating in late March, the issue was university budget cuts. Although the students' concerns have since broadened to include national political themes, their major focus has continued to be specific infringements of their rights--particularly the arrests of fellow students for minor infractions. Even on sensitive issues, such as torture and military dictatorship, the students have largely confined their protests to discussions and orderly marches. Student demonstrations have now spread to Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre, and other cities, but students there are also refraining from provocative actions that would almost certainly culminate in violence and mass arrests.

1, 3, 4, 5, 11 The restraint of the security forces has been even more remarkable. Their intense concern was shown by the hasty erection of barricades in Sao Paulo and the monitoring of activities in Rio by helicopter. Although many of the demonstrators have explicitly violated prohibitions by university and government officials, there have been only a few arrests. The Brazilian military forces are famous in Latin America for the attention they devote

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to internal security matters, but in this instance they seem wary, even afraid, that an overreaction on their part could generate wide public disruptions. Nevertheless, the fact that the agitation is becoming nationwide and that there are now rumors of participation by subversive elements increases the likelihood of an eventual crackdown.

A Chronology of Recent Events

- In mid-March, Geisel told congressional leaders that he expected them to pass a judicial amendment, which the opposition had already begun to attack as undemocratic and which they were attempting to revise.
- On March 30, the opposition succeeded in blocking passage of the amendment.
- On April 1, in a nationwide speech, Geisel condemned the opposition for having made "irrelevant demands" and ordered a two-week congressional recess.
- During April 13-14, Geisel signed a decree incorporating the judicial amendment into the Constitution and proclaimed a series of measures that extend the presidential term from five to six years and made elections indirect for state governors and one third of the senate--giving control to state electoral colleges that are dominated by the progovernment party.

Geisel's Political Initiatives

3, 2, 11 So far, the reaction of civilian politicians to Geisel's initiatives of last month has been one of muted pessimism. The leaders of the progovernment party have made only half-hearted attempts to justify the President's reorganization of the political game rules as a necessary response to the missteps by the opposition. Privately, some of them admit that they have lost confidence in Geisel and are discouraged about their own prospects.

Political and Military Leaders Confused

3, 2, 11 Meanwhile, most opposition leaders, although privately furious that Geisel has effectively sabotaged their ability to play an important role in the country, have refrained from outspoken criticism, apparently fearful

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that a public display of their feelings would result in more reprisals and possible abolition of their party.

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// In sum, there is widespread confusion on the part of all politically conscious groups regarding recent events and what they mean for the future course of democracy in Brazil. Although President Geisel throughout his administration has alternated between the espousal of democratic procedures and the use of dictatorial powers, his personal involvement in nationwide local elections last fall seemed to be fresh evidence of his strong commitment to civilian politics. His most recent actions, however, have transformed his image from that of the most liberal and moderate of military presidents since 1964 to the most dictatorial.

// The taciturn Geisel has not explained the reasons for his latest intervention in the political process. As is usual in times of crisis, he acted decisively and has allowed the events to speak for themselves. It appears that the President immediately felt rebuffed by the congressional veto and decided to intervene. The fact that his most significant actions did not follow upon the closure of congress, but were delayed two weeks, suggests that more powerful reasons were also at play.

// Since the military takeover in 1964, all governments have proclaimed their adherence to the "Brazilian revolution." The political goals have never been

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specifically defined, but it has been clear from the outset that the military did not plan to retain power permanently. At the same time, the military did not intend to hand the government over to the unstable, personality-centered political parties that had existed previously. In his inaugural address in March 1964, Humberto Castello Branco said, "the takeoff toward economic development, through moral, educational, material, and political elevation, will be a central object of the government's attention." The following year his administration dissolved all existing national parties with the intent of eliminating what it considered to be irresponsible politics, and began preparations for a new system based on two parties--the progovernment National Renewal Alliance (ARENA) and the opposition Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB). The view of Castello Branco's successors--including Geisel--has been that political parties must support the national government and its interests. In times of national crisis, criticism of administrative proposals can, therefore, be easily interpreted as subversive, or at least irresponsible, attempts to undermine faith in the regime.

Geisel's Justifications

// It now seems apparent that Geisel viewed his most recent actions as being taken in defense of the "revolution" and that he regarded the opposition's attack on his judicial reform bill as unacceptable, especially at a time when he was confronted by growing opposition within the business community to government austerity measures, rampant inflation, and serious disagreement with the US. He apparently has decided to force the opposition party either to reform itself or disband.

// If this view is correct, Brazilian political development is at crossroads. Despite the repeated statements by military leaders that they eventually intend to return power to responsible civilians, it is increasingly clear that the majority believe that they are the only legitimate political institution in Brazil, and they are unwilling to relinquish enough control to allow civilian parties to develop an identity and institutional life of their own.

// It may be that Geisel, by taking a more active role in civilian politics than his predecessors and by acting as the head of the progovernment party, has some vague

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hope of combining the military and civilians under one predominant party system, similar to the one operating in Mexico. If so, he has not taken steps to merge the two or done anything to give the party a sense of mission. In fact, his apparent unwillingness to give any clear indication of his political intentions may account in large measure for the continuing reports that he plans to abolish both parties and establish a multiparty system. In spite of the President's earlier efforts to restore political liberties, Brazil does not seem any closer to political democracy than it was at the outset of his administration--a total reversal of the situation that existed just two years ago.

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Brazil: Concern Over Student Protests

1, 4 Student activism has recently emerged as a major preoccupation for the Brazilian government. University students in several parts of the country have staged a series of demonstrations, initially to protest academic conditions, but increasingly to make political demands on the government. Thus far security officials have responded with restraint, but they are apprehensive about the possibility of further demonstrations.

1 On May 10, thousands of students in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and Rio Grande do Sul participated in campus protests. They demanded increased political liberalization and the release of eight students and workers previously arrested on charges of subversion. The demonstrations were by far the largest since the late 1960s when student activism and leftist subversion, against a backdrop of economic uncertainty, created a crisis atmosphere for the young military government.

4 In the ensuing years, subversion was wiped out, students were cowed, and the so-called economic miracle took hold. More recently, however, the economy has again faltered and the regime has faced renewed questioning of its performance, frequently by politicians and at times by businessmen and entrepreneurs. Labor discontent has surfaced from time to time as well.

4 In response, the regime sometimes has taken stern measures, such as the recent closure of congress after it balked at certain legislation the administration wanted passed. The closure seems to have gone a long way toward turning the demonstrating students' concern from largely academic matters to more fundamental political preoccupations. Ironically, President Geisel had sought, initially at least, to liberalize the regime with a view toward building greater public support for the government. Instead, Geisel has felt obliged, both by changing circumstances and by pressure from conservative military colleagues, to take increasingly tougher measures.

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4 The size and scope of the protests may have surprised the government, and has contributed to a sense of alarm among security officials who are uncertain how to handle future student problems. Indeed, the governor of Sao Paulo recently came out in favor of taking measures to prevent further demonstrations, while the local ranking army officer ordered that there be no arrests of demonstrators.

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4 For many officers, the current situation is a painful reminder of the late 1960s, when dissent reached serious proportions. At least some are bound to renew the call for stringent security measures.

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Ecuador: Constitutional Commission Approves Bucaram

1 In a surprising decision, two Ecuadorean constitu-
2 tional commissions have paved the way for populist leader
Assad Bucaram to run in next year's presidential elec-
tion. The Ecuadorean military, led by General Guillermo
Rodriguez Lara, seized power in 1972 to prevent Bucaram--
an ardent foe of both the military and the oligarchy--
from attaining the presidency.

1 While most local politicians concede that Bucaram
could win a plurality on the first ballot, anti-Bucaram
forces believe they can combine to defeat him in a second
round, which will be required if no candidate obtains a
first-ballot majority.

3 The constitutional commissions had been under ex-
treme pressure from Ecuador's military leaders to find
some pretext to disqualify Bucaram. The unexpected de-
cision to allow him to run could cause some military
2 leaders to reconsider their announced intention to re-
turn Ecuador to civilian rule by next year.

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The Eastern Caribbean: The Radical Left Turns to Electoral Politics

Marxist-oriented radicals in the Eastern Caribbean, many of whom were active in the black power movement in the late 1960s, are increasingly turning to conventional electoral politics as the likeliest route to power.

These leaders have adopted various strategies to allow them to compete in established political systems. No doubt impressed by the success of the young radicals in Jamaica in gaining positions of influence in the ruling People's National Party, some leftists are working within traditional parties with a view toward eventually co-opting them. Others have formed broad fronts in hopes of defeating a well-entrenched leader. These tactics have already enabled several radical groups to assume positions as leading oppositionists and could allow others to become major contenders for power in the years ahead.

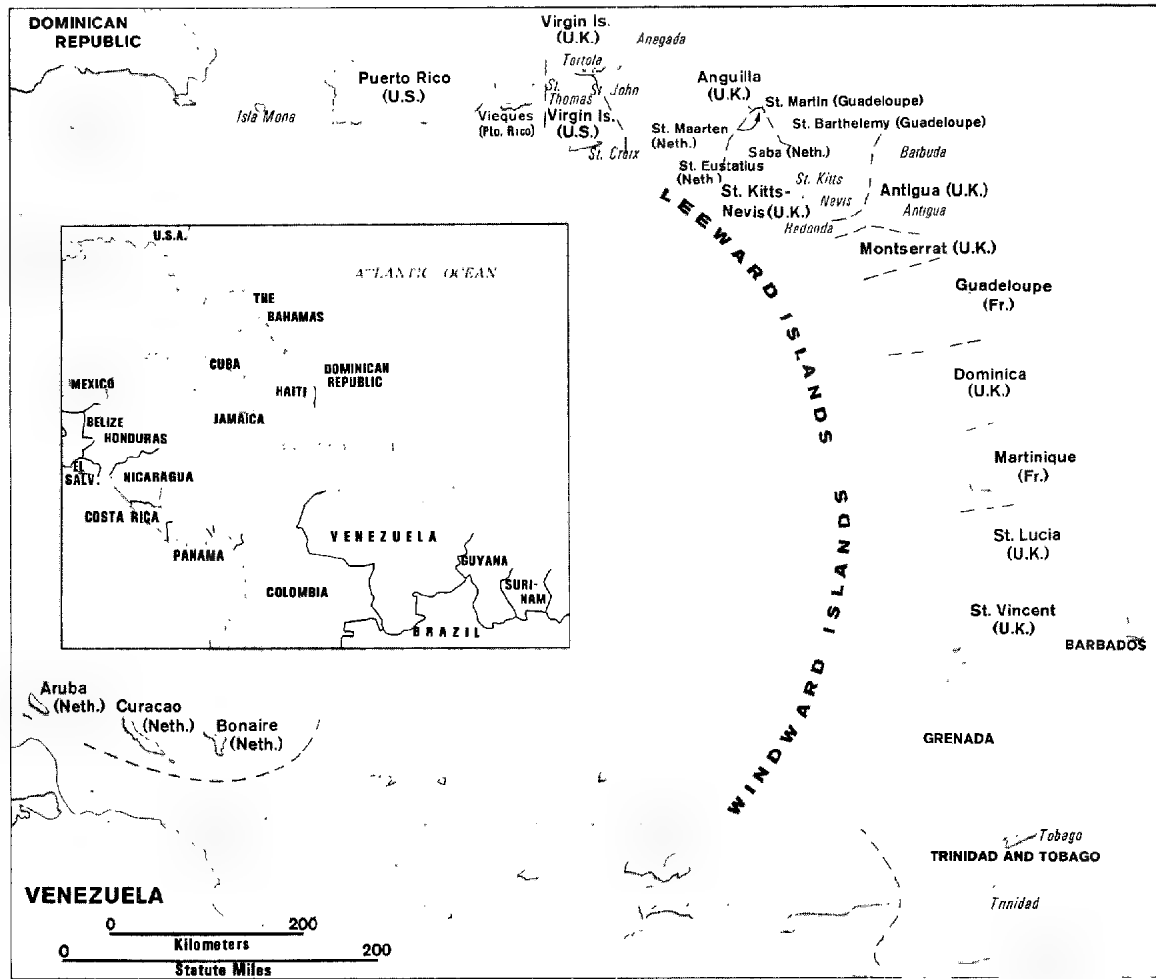
Barbados

In Barbados, a group of Marxist university activists led by Ralph Gonzalves has joined with young Democratic Labor Party (DLP) regulars in an attempt to push the party toward a leftist course. One of the two established labor-based parties, the Democratic Labor Party, was in power for 15 years under the leadership of Prime Minister Errol Barrow until his defeat last September. Under Barrow the DLP, like its counterpart the Barbados Labor Party, hewed generally to a middle-of-the-road position both domestically and in foreign policy, at least until the final months when Barrow began to shift leftward.

To provide the DLP with ideological guidance, several of the party's younger leaders held a rally in late February and invited Gonzalves to be the keynote speaker. Gonzalves, who holds a graduate degree from Britain's

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University of Manchester and teaches at the Cave Hill campus of the University of the West Indies, is rapidly building a reputation in the Caribbean as an electrifying rabble rouser and an accomplished political organizer. He has divided his energies between Barbados and his native St. Vincent where he helped found a hard-line Marxist-Leninist movement, the Youlou United Liberation Organization.

In addressing the assembled DLP faithful, Gonzalves encouraged them to absorb those "socialist thinkers and actors" on the island previously considered too extremist for party membership. To vocal acclaim, he punctuated his call for a party reeducation campaign with chants of "discipline, discipline."

Gonzalves is still a long way from translating stump oratory into a position of influence in the party. He has acquired a respectable podium for delivering his ideological message, however.

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As a younger generation of party leaders move to the forefront, the DLP is increasingly likely to adopt a third-world socialist posture and may well find it useful to bring Gonzalves and the university radicals into the party in order to improve its appeal to politicized youth.

St. Lucia

A second country where a radical group is trying to come to power by gaining control of an established party is St. Lucia, one of the five British Associated States. George Odlum, a Marxist politician who formerly taught at Oxford University, first came to prominence in 1970 as the leader of a group called the Forum that was linked to the Caribbean-wide black power movement. He later came to believe that third-party alternatives had little chance of succeeding and has gradually worked his way to a position of influence in the St. Lucia Labour Party, the major opposition to the ruling United Workers Party.

Odlum's brand of socialism has met with broad support in the party, and only last minute maneuvering kept

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him from becoming party leader in the January local elections; he remains second in the hierarchy. Odlum has also been active outside the party in trying to build a mass following. He took control of a banana workers union last year and promptly engineered a major strike. Because of his intellectual gifts and dynamism, Odlum is generally conceded a strong chance of eventually assuming power.

Grenada

In Grenada, the Marxist-oriented New Jewel Movement joined forces last year with two centrist parties to try to defeat the durable but eccentric Prime Minister Eric Gairy. The coalition--called the People's Alliance--was narrowly defeated in the December election, but still has an outside chance of replacing Gairy in the near future. The Prime Minister's 9-6 parliamentary seat majority is threatened by a legal challenge involving three seats. Some observers expect that a local court will rule in favor of the Alliance on two of these seats. If this happens, Gairy would probably be forced to hold special by-elections or call another general election.

The Cuban Tie

The Castro government not only stands to gain from the strengthened position of radical groups in the Eastern Caribbean, but in some cases may have helped persuade leftist leaders that participating in conventional politics is the best course to follow. It would be in keeping with Havana's policy toward the Caribbean--reinforced by the Jamaican experience--to encourage local leaders to use established parties or "progressive" coalitions as vehicles to power.

It was soon after Gonzalves' visit to Cuba in January that he wangled an invitation to speak to the DLP. Tim Hector, leader of the Afro-Caribbean Liberation Movement in Antigua, also visited Cuba early this year and reportedly now plans to seek election to the Antiguan House of Assembly. Roosevelt Douglas, a longtime black power advocate and a stalking horse for Havana in the Eastern Caribbean, has been working closely with Dominica's Premier Patrick John to steer him on a leftward course.

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Basic forces have pushed the center of gravity of Caribbean politics leftward in recent years and are likely to continue to do so. Limited resources and frequently deteriorating economic situations combined with populations that have large percentages of people under 21 years of age have significantly improved the prospects of the left. If by joining established parties, radical politicians have frequently had to tone down their rhetoric, they have also gained a stamp of legitimacy they can use to try to propel themselves to power.

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El Salvador: Trying Times Ahead

The murder of Salvadoran Foreign Minister Mauricio Borgonovo last week, along with several incidents that have occurred since the February presidential election, will increase tensions in El Salvador. Ironically, a state of siege, imposed following post-election violence, has added to, rather than reduced, tensions. The result has been a church-state confrontation, a rise in terrorist activities, and an uneasy political future.

State of Siege Imposed

1 The state of siege was imposed following a violent protest against the fraudulent presidential election. 2 Eight demonstrators were killed and scores injured when the National Guard clashed with 5,000 protesters demanding that the election be voided. Following the clash, the opposition presidential candidate who led the demonstration was forced into exile in Costa Rica.

3 The state of siege has been used to harass, intimidate, and neutralize the opposition. The courts and news media have been placed under military control and citizens have not been allowed to enter or leave the country. Political meetings and rallies have been banned and opposition leaders have been exiled or have gone into hiding.

Church-State Tensions

1 The government's harsh repression of dissidents, including several priests, has prompted public denunciations from the once reticent Salvadoran Catholic Church. 3 Since February, the government has been harassing priests and churches suspected of leftist affiliations. Six 16 foreign priests have been expelled, including two Americans, and two others have been murdered by suspected right-wing groups. The most recent incident occurred last week when a Jesuit priest was killed by the rightist

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White Warriors Union seeking revenge for the foreign minister's death. This group has warned of further reprisals against suspected leftist priests.

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6 The church hierarchy has challenged the government
7 with unexpected forcefulness. It has publicly accused
16 the government of involvement in torture, illegal detentions, harassment, and intimidation. Following the ambush killing of a Jesuit priest in March, church participation in any official state acts or ceremonies was prohibited by the Archbishop of San Salvador. Vatican officials have also begun to express their concern over the Salvadoran government's treatment of priests.

Terrorism

16 The recent kidnaping of Foreign Minister Borgonovo, and his subsequent murder, is indicative of the increased level of terrorist aggressiveness. Two groups, the FPL and the Popular Revolutionary Army (ERP), are mainly responsible for the terrorism.

8 The FPL was formed in late 1972 and advocates violence
9 and the overthrow of the "fascist" regime in San Salvador, which it accuses of murders, kidnapings, and forced exile of government opponents. During the past four years, the
16 FPL has carried out increasingly daring terrorist operations. Last September, it dynamited the homes of two former high government officials. In October, the FPL claimed credit for the bombing of a National Guard provincial headquarters. Early this year, the group murdered a justice of the peace and on May 11, in its boldest act, murdered Foreign Minister Borgonovo.

9 The ERP first appeared in March 1972. Since then, it
11 has engaged in bombings and kidnapings for ransom. Three months ago, in its first political kidnaping, the ERP abducted a wealthy industrialist and demanded the release of two prisoners. The government released the two before learning that the victim had died, apparently of wounds sustained during the kidnaping.

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The Coming Challenge

16 The government has responded to the foreign minister's murder by cracking down on all suspected subversive elements. Since the government recognizes the difficulty of penetrating the terrorist groups, it will most likely make examples of leftist priests and dissidents. The state of siege will undoubtedly continue for the foreseeable future, probably beyond the July 1 inauguration of President-elect Romero. The willingness of the government to employ heavy-handed tactics was demonstrated on May 1 when 16 leftist demonstrators died in a clash with the National Guard during an illegal May Day demonstration.

16 President-elect Romero, a law-and-order hard-liner, has been steadily increasing his influence over government policy. Last year he was responsible for reversing the scheduled agrarian reform projects that had been promised by Molina. Soon after Borgonovo's abduction, Molina and Romero met and decided not to accede to the terrorist demands. Repressive tactics are almost certain to be continued during the Romero administration. The President-elect has reportedly threatened to expel all Jesuits when he takes office.

16 Terrorism, however, is unlikely to diminish in the near future. While the FPL and the ERP do not pose a serious threat to the stability of the government by themselves, they have conducted terrorist operations that have embarrassed the government and caused it to institute increasingly repressive measures.

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14/ Other challenges are the approximately 100,000 land-
less peasants awaiting long-promised land reform and the
staggering rate of unemployment. Romero is likely to
move slowly in solving these problems. He realizes that
if he tries to ameliorate the plight of the peasants, he
will run the risk of alienating agro-commercial interests.
16/ The alternative, however, could be peasant disorders.
The government's promises of reform have led to rising
expectations, not only for better economic and social
conditions, but also for a greater voice in the political
process.

Outlook

Rumors of prospective military coups, planned by of-
ficers disconcerted over the repressive measures or by
the government's inability to maintain order, are likely
to intensify.

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Although a prolonged wave
of repression and uneasiness could eventually galvanize
some elements of the military to move against the govern-
ment, there is no evidence at present that military dis-
content has united around an individual officer or group
of officers.

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Colombia: Liberal Party Candidate for 1978
Presidential Election

The current front-runner for the Liberal Party presidential nomination, Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala, officially opened his campaign earlier this month with a well-organized public rally in Bogota. Turbay is in contention with two other Liberal Party presidential hopefuls--former president Carlos Lleras Restrepo and former minister Hernando Agudelo Villa. Turbay heads one of the strongest factions within the party, however, and he is currently regarded as the most likely one to walk away with the nomination at the national convention next February.

A member of the party for 30 years, Turbay is an astute politician who has used his position as Liberal Party director to dominate Colombia's power politics. He has made decisions on important party matters and has been the one others turn to for advice. Turbay played a major role in the 1974 election campaign of President Lopez. Their mutual support, however, is strictly a marriage of convenience, since Lopez and Turbay have a deep personal antipathy that goes back a number of years.



At this early stage of the pre-election game, Turbay's campaign is still closely identified with the Lopez government, and it is unlikely, therefore, that Turbay's initial policy-orientated speeches will deviate from the domestic and international policies of the administration. Indeed, Turbay has already indicated that, if elected, his foreign policy goals and priorities will be similar to those of Lopez.

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In a recent speech, Turbay stated that he favored continued use of the UN and the Organization of American States as the focal points of Colombian foreign relations, emphasizing in particular the creation of multiple links with other nations. Turbay said he would continue to emphasize international economic matters, including increased efforts to promote a North-South dialogue aimed at eliminating the gap between rich and poor nations.

Eventually Turbay will have to move away from such generalities and address himself to more specific issues, especially Colombia's worsening social and economic problems. Governmental corruption, student unrest, kidnappings, rampant crime, and guerrilla activities are some of the country's ills Turbay will inherit if elected. His most critical problem, however, will be inflation.

Massive coffee export earnings, which account for 65 percent of Colombia's foreign revenues, have reached record highs, while inflation has reduced the average wage earner's buying power to record lows. At the same time, the political arena has been agitated by an unsuccessful attempt by elements of the Conservative Party to slander President Lopez and force his resignation.

The spirit of bipartisan cooperation on which the National Front agreement between the two major parties has been based since 1958 has suffered a serious setback and, according to press reports, "public morality" promises to be on the list of central issues in the presidential campaign. The evidence of a deterioration of the system by which Liberals and Conservatives share ministerial posts, governorships, and other federal positions has encouraged the left-wing parties, which are trying to strengthen their political influence.

El Espectador, Bogota's liberal morning newspaper, published an editorial in opposition to Turbay, stating that in view of the country's numerous and pressing problems Turbay was unqualified to be president. Indeed, while he is regarded as a skillful and clever politician,

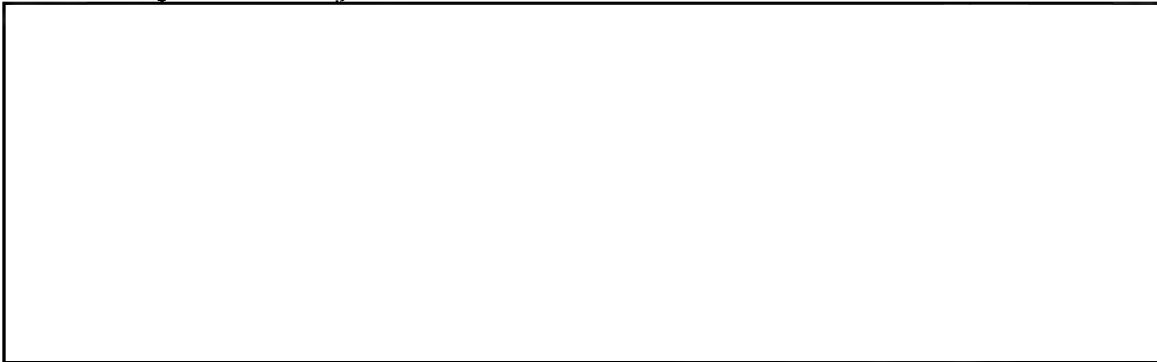
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there are many in both parties who distrust Turbay on the grounds that his convictions change with the political winds. In addition, independent groups within the Liberal Party oppose Turbay because of his affiliation with unsavory groups, including powerful rings of drug smugglers looking for political protection.

One of the principal reasons for Turbay's longevity in the upper ranks of Colombian politics has been his ability to compromise and to avoid confrontations during crucial periods. Many feel that the state of political affairs itself has reached a crucial period in Colombia. Turbay may well have the political skills to be elected president, but it remains to be seen whether he is capable of implementing solutions to Colombia's problems and of preserving its democratic institutions.



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Guyana: Burnham's Campaign Tasks

7 The May Day rally in Georgetown, at which popular discontent with the administrations economic policies was clearly evident, highlighted some of the problems that will confront Prime Minister Forbes Burnham in the general election tentatively scheduled for 1978. Burnham must neutralize the opposition of Marxist Cheddi Jagan, ameliorate the East Indian community's dissatisfaction with his administration and rebuild his constituency among black workers in the country. Burnham hopes to accomplish these tasks without jeopardizing his economic austerity program.

There are three important, interrelated dimensions of Jagan's opposition to Burnham:

/ --He has attempted to use his connections with Moscow and Havana as leverage to force Burnham to share power with him. Jagan is aware that the Prime Minister is sensitive to the Communist countries' uneasiness with Burnham-style socialism. For example, although Burnham signed an agreement with the Soviet-dominated Council for Economic Mutual Assistance last December in hopes of obtaining economic aid, Moscow apparently still wants Burnham to accommodate Jagan as a condition for economic assistance.

2 --Jagan uses his influence in the East Indian community to harass Burnham's government by periodically calling the East Indian sugar workers out on strike. Jagan's image among the East Indians is tarnished, however, because he has been unable to force Burnham to end alleged discrimination by government agencies against the East Indians.

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--Although Jagan has threatened to boycott the election, during the past year, he has tried to broaden his base of support by appealing to militant black workers and other dissidents. He has increased his criticism of the government's economic austerity program and its record on civil liberties. Jagan has refused to support the administration's "defense bonds" scheme to obtain savings from workers, has criticized the government's reluctance to increase wages and benefits for public employees, and says that little real progress has been made in plans for workers' participation in management. Jagan reportedly also is cooperating with militant dissidents who are trying to mobilize black bauxite workers.

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6 Burnham has also built up his security forces with Cuban assistance. These forces, recruited primarily from the black population, would probably be used in the event of a serious strike by the predominantly East Indian sugar workers.

7 The Prime Minister is also trying to build up good will among the East Indians for his regime, and is trying to exploit the East Indians' disillusionment with Jagan's performance (although because of racial identification, most East Indians will probably vote for Jagan in the election). In March, he affirmed to a conservative East Indian group the government's intention to protect civil liberties; ordered a retrial for a member of Jagan's party convicted of a murder charge; and dropped the state's case against three prominent dissidents arrested in 1976 on charges of breaking an unpopular publications law. In a speech to his party's youth wing, the Prime Minister exhorted them to work for "racial amity" and "reach out" to the East Indian community. In a Cabinet shakeup in April, he appointed an East Indian as minister of education.

7 During his current "meet the people" campaign tour, Burnham made a foray into an East Indian sugar producing district where he blamed government officials for blocking communications between himself and the people and for not ensuring prompt provision of social services. He responded to earlier May Day opposition allegations by promising action on wage standardization, increased benefits, and improved working conditions. He also promised the community a new school, a textile mill, irrigation and drainage projects, and the right to buy house lots for a nominal fee.

7 Burnham must also rebuild his bridges to the black workers who have constituted his traditional base of power, but his economic austerity program is unpopular. Workers and union leaders already fear that a cutback in government spending will lead to a rise in unemployment in the country. The unions have been especially concerned about the government effort to curtail wage increases and the cutback on food subsidies while prices are rising.

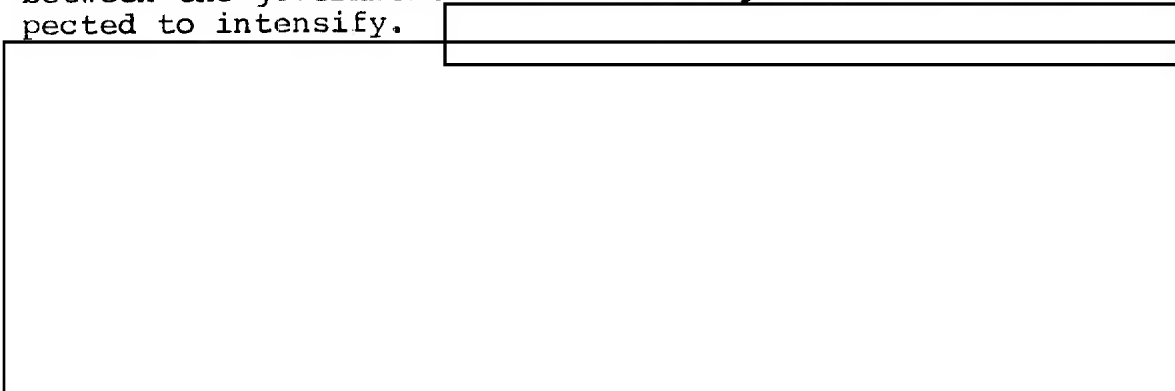
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7 Burnham will find it difficult to alleviate worker disaffection. He was forced to accept the union leaders' advice that his plan to force workers to buy defense bonds should not be made compulsory. In addition, since the last half of 1976, workers have disregarded their union leaders and gone on strike to protest government policies. Last December, for example, the black bauxite workers in Linden staged a walkout to protest an agreement signed between the union and the government-owned bauxite company. The workers said the union was co-opted by Burnham and did not represent their interests. After the strike, the government, attempted to pacify the workers by starting a home building program and providing more social services in Linden. The labor movement, however, is persuaded that Burnham intends to resist its demands and bring unions under government control. Some leaders feel that the new minister of labor, health, and housing, Hamilton Green, has little sympathy for labor and will not effectively represent its interests.

Clearly, Burnham realizes that he must persuade Guyanese citizens that his policies will resolve basic economic dilemmas. These economic problems, however, are likely to make his promises ring hollow, and tensions between the government and the working class can be expected to intensify.

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